

Northwell Health

Great Place to Work 2020-2021

"I am not exaggerating when I tell people that my organization, Northwell Health, has been through a war. What other metaphor even comes close?" – Michael Dowling, President and CEO

As the largest healthcare system in New York, we were at the epicenter of the global pandemic. In mid-March, we had roughly 100 COVID-19 patients; two weeks later, nearly 3,000. Overall, we treated 1 in every 5 of New York State's COVID-19 patients — over 100,000 total to-date.

We had a unique view of the unfolding pandemic, as well as a deeply felt responsibility to galvanize the might of our resources and people expertise in combatting it. We recognize that a significant part of the story still lies ahead as we focus on supporting our employees and communities in healing and recovery from these traumatic times.

Despite the pressure test of these past months, and even in the darkest days, our values — Truly Compassionate, Truly Innovative, Truly Ambitious, Truly Together, and Truly Ourselves — continued to shine through.

Our leadership team made strenuous efforts to nurture a great workplace for all, developing holistic support programs for employees and their families, issuing transparent and timely communications, and reshaping policies based on employee feedback and real-time learnings. Our extraordinary people responded with energy, courage, and innovation to serve our patients and support each other through desperate times. We were buoyed by our generous community and the volunteer clinicians who rushed from across the U.S. to help us when the pandemic struck. As the worst subsided, we shared the lessons we've learned about sustaining a safe, resilient, and supportive working environment with national audiences and other health systems.

COVID-19's IMPACT ON OUR PEOPLE

"You need three things to care for patients in this crisis: Beds, equipment, and staff, and by far, staff is the most important." – Mark Solazzo, EVP and Chief Operating Officer

In 2017, we launched our employee promise, "Made for this," to capture who we are, how we live, and why we're committed to our mission. It's our shared belief that caring runs through everything we do. Driven by this commitment, our first priority was protecting those impacted. In Michael Dowling's words, "In a crisis like this, you throw the budget out and do what is good for your community and your people."

While New York did not see its first COVID-positive case until March 1, we activated our Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on February 4, bringing together executives from across Northwell. The EOC stood up multiple workstreams to prioritize the safety and physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and financial well-being of employees and their families.

Safety and Support in the Workplace

A critical first step was to make the workplace as safe as possible. For almost 10,000 of our people, that meant an immediate move to working from home. On the frontlines, we proactively implemented procedures to identify potential patients entering our facilities and invested more than \$5 million in personal protective equipment (PPE), testing everyone to ensure the correct sizing for respirator seals.

As we've learned, access to reliable testing is paramount. Early on, we established nine COVID testing centers for employees across the NY metro area; more than 2,000 were tested along with 900 new hires

during the first few weeks. We later added serology testing at 52 sites where any employee could be screened for antibodies, helping researchers learn more about the virus. In just two weeks, more than 46,000 employees participated, and only 13.7% tested positive for antibodies despite the high risk of exposure, validating early protocols like our mask mandate and other safety procedures. Even with our best safety efforts, 425 of our people were quarantined by early April, and 9% were diagnosed with COVID-19 between late February and the end of April. Our Emergency Health Services team quickly built a real-time reporting tool to track data, including the number of employees exposed and positive test results, to monitor and mitigate infections across our hospitals.

Dealing with a highly contagious virus, many employees were understandably worried about posing a risk to their families. To relieve that burden, the EOC established partnerships with IHG Hotels, Ronald McDonald House, and various universities to provide housing so employees could physically distance from loved ones. Those who found alternative accommodations outside of this program were reimbursed for their expenses. We also partnered with a transportation company to provide dedicated shuttles, so no one had to worry about potentially infecting other public transit passengers or being infected themselves.

Supporting and protecting employees also meant providing easy access to reliable, accurate, and timely information, especially when misinformation was rife. We created a central website — the Coronavirus Employee Resource Center — so our people could quickly retrieve the latest job-critical information without firewalls or barriers. It received more than 730,000 visits between March and September and has proven to be a valuable source of truth. The Internal Communications team also launched a text messaging service where employees could opt-in — more than 34,000 did — to receive safety alerts via text.

We created a dedicated site for leaders containing the most up-to-date information to cascade and tools to help them connect with and manage teams through adversity. In turn, senior executives shared frequent email and video messages detailing our progress against the pandemic and celebrating successes.

Our people appreciated leadership's transparency and our close attention to safety. "The way we came together during the COVID-19 crisis was spectacular. We moved mountains to ensure we could handle the surge while maintaining safety for our patients and staff. I have never seen anything like that in my professional life." – Employee response to Trust Index Survey.

Preparing our People

No matter the person's role, the situation was far from normal, but our people responded heroically to the challenges, banding together in the face of the pandemic.

As we expanded our capacity to treat COVID-19 patients, we welcomed back recently retired employees, along with hundreds of agency nurses, respiratory therapists, and other health professionals who temporarily joined our ranks. We asked employees to take on different roles and provide support where it was most needed. About 3,500 employees were reassigned to new positions in our hospitals and testing centers, from patient transports and serology testing through social work and HR. Over 800 ambulatory center physicians were reassigned to hospitals, and 40 newly minted nurses went straight from school to our COVID-19 call centers. We now have a core group of volunteers ready to be reassigned as needed for future resurgences.

We provided comprehensive refresher training for those who needed an update on clinical skills, who moved to their new roles only when they felt confident. For Colleen Conaty, one of our nurses charged with educating clinicians about PPE, the experience has been life-changing. "I have never seen strength like this in my lifetime," she said. "Though these times are dark, this team has brought light into this world and shown me what it means to truly be a hero. Working alongside these people has been the privilege and the honor of a lifetime."

We also reassigned employees who did not feel comfortable or had pre-existing conditions to work remotely to avoid exposure. None of this was mandatory, and anyone uncomfortable with reassignment could take personal time or leave with full benefits.

Caregivers from other health systems selflessly volunteered to work with us, traveling to New York to provide critical clinical support as patient numbers escalated, and frontline teams faced exhaustion. Dr. RJ Bunnell, one of 48 caregivers deployed to Northwell from Intermountain Healthcare in Utah, said, "A line from 'Here Comes the Sun' by the Beatles plays on the hospital PA system when COVID-19 patients are discharged. What a beautiful anthem of hope in such dark times! We're entering the 'hot zone' tomorrow, and we can't wait."

We're grateful for their bravery and commitment and have formed novel partnerships with healthcare providers across the U.S. as a result. As the virus emerged in other states, we returned the favor, deploying volunteer clinical teams to Georgia, Utah, and Texas. Despite separation from family and working in unfamiliar settings, our people stepped up. One nurse, Kristine Chan, even postponed her wedding to volunteer, saying her vows could wait because COVID-19 is a "terrifying virus, and we need all hands on deck."

During the pandemic, we paused on some of our formal development programs to fight the virus. Yet many of our people, especially those reassigned to different roles or units, experienced unexpected twists to their career journeys, and developed new skills and insights into their potential. We expect this will bring valuable new perspectives to our ongoing career development conversations.

Listening to Employees

To ensure our support programs and resources met employee needs, whether onsite or at home, we launched the COVID-19 Employee Support Survey in May. We asked what resources they needed to feel safe and supported, and more than 24,000 employees responded in just one week.

Based on this data, we implemented various support and well-being programs, described in more detail below. Simultaneously, we proactively offered additional psychological support to those the survey identified as our most vulnerable population, like respiratory therapists and critical care nurses. It also guided the development of our strategy and tools to help leaders build emotional resilience in their teams, as well as additional family support including free, age-appropriate resources, like videos and online interactive programs for employees to use to help their children cope with fears about the pandemic.

In July, we invited all 14,000 employees who had experienced any period of working from home to participate in a Remote Work Survey and leveraged its insights in our "Work Well" initiative on remote work policies, models, and strategy for productivity and well-being. Alongside surveys, we developed a continuous listening approach across social media channels, helping us tune in to organic conversations about our employees' day-to-day needs and experiences.

As we developed programs and resources, our Internal Communications team prioritized communications to raise awareness of the programs, educating employees on how to use existing and new resources, and convey that programs would continue to evolve to meet emerging challenges caused by the pandemic in the months and years ahead.

Supporting employee health is always our priority, and this year Northwell was named a 2020 Healthiest 100 Workplaces in America. The award recognizes best practices in creating a healthy workplace across six criteria, including leadership, communications, and engagement. To maintain that high standard during the pandemic, we kept well-being top of mind, taking a thoughtful, holistic approach to developing new or expanding existing programs across the following five well-being areas:

1. Physical

We know people are more prone to illness during times of stress, so we developed educational initiatives including preventative health and sleep health webinars and healthy eating promotions, even creating a healthy recipe cookbook for employees. The Employee Wellness Team used our Facebook group Northwell Life to share 165 posts promoting the free programs and services available, daily self-care tips, and over 100 new health videos that have received over 19,000 views.

To help employees take charge of their physical health, we expanded existing complimentary program offerings, including apps such as Calm to reduce stress and anxiety, and NEOU to promote physical activity with on-demand fitness classes.

We housed all of the offerings in the Coronavirus Employee Resource Center — a one-stop-shop where employees could filter by topic areas like stress management, physical well-being, or healthy eating.

2. Emotional

Healthcare professionals are exceptional at providing patients with quality care, empathy, and respect, but that can come at the expense of their own capacity to grieve, mourn, and heal. We strive to foster an environment that promotes self-care, reflection, and emotional support, acutely sensitive to the importance of reducing compassion fatigue and burnout. Given the stressful conditions, we ramped up existing support systems and added new ones. Below are a few examples.

Programs to boost employees' ability to recover, adapt, and thrive in the face of adversity were developed and expanded. Recognizing that frontline employees were under immense pressure and needed a way to find calm moments and create mental separation between home and work, we developed Tranquility Tents. These safe and calming environments provide space for employees to reflect, meditate, or pray before or after a shift. We placed materials outlining Northwell's well-being resources throughout the tents, updating the content weekly, and partnered with an outside organization to have behavioral health professionals onsite. Our remote teams came together to assemble wellness kits that were featured in the tents. The response has been very positive. "Northwell providing this space has proven to us that we all matter," says Sargine Knight, Patient Care Associate, North Shore University Hospital. Although we developed the tents in response to the pandemic, indoor spaces replacing the tents have become a permanent feature at our hospitals.

"They have become a place our team can rely on to find a shoulder to cry on, a place to pray, to stretch, listen to music, or paint a stone to memorialize their feelings. While the journey is still ahead of us all, the Tranquility Tent has become a place of solace and healing." — Lisa Khavkin, VP Human Resources,

Huntington Hospital

We also expanded Team Lavender, the interdisciplinary rapid peer support program that aids our caregivers in times of crisis and/or high stress. Between May - August, Team Lavender facilitated 440+ responses (emergent and proactive) across 20 hospital sites. The team's impact on engagement scores and its integral part of COVID-19 support will be featured in an article for "Nursing2021: Nursing Excellence Journal".

Having someone to talk to during tough times is critical. Our Employee and Family Assistance Program (EAP) continued to be available 24/7 to provide free, confidential counseling for employees and their families. In response to the pandemic, the Employee Wellness team launched the Emotional Support Call Center in collaboration with EAP, the Behavioral Health service line, and chaplaincy services to offer counsel and provide referrals as necessary. Our new Center for Traumatic Stress, Resilience, and Recovery proactively called employees in vulnerable or hard-hit facilities to ask how they were coping and developed a Stress First Aid program to help employees identify and resolve the effects of stress.

We also initiated educational events to expand leadership capabilities. One example was a virtual conference, A Leadership Experience: Nurturing Employee Well-being, that featured speakers experienced in trauma recovery, well-being, and resilience, which was attended by nearly 1,000 leaders. We developed webinars, toolkits, and resources to help leaders recognize trauma, understand employees' behavioral health during a crisis, and lead empathetically.

3. Social and Belonging

One of our biggest challenges was ensuring that our people continued to feel connected and engaged while working remotely or in vastly changed and often frightening circumstances. To consider the full range of employee needs, we developed a set of Inclusion Principles to guide our efforts. The principles promote diversity and call for a review of all programs and initiatives to ensure inclusion, transparency, equity, and fairness. They're designed to foster a sense of belonging and a safe space for all employees to be heard.

We created opportunities for employees to come together as a community and honor our long-standing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. In the wake of this summer's racial justice protests, we hosted a series of town halls and Q&As led by Michael Dowling, focused on what we can do individually and as an organization to fight racism and discrimination. A senior physician organized a White Coats for Black Lives event across our hospitals where employees came outside and took a knee in honor of George Floyd. "There is zero tolerance for racism anywhere at Northwell Health," he told the hundreds of employees in attendance. "Our leadership team is here to support you on this."

"One of the most powerful things that Northwell has done is acknowledge racism as a public health issue," said Andrea De Loney, Project Manager, Center for Equity of Care. "When the reports of the recent deaths hit the news, so many of us could not remain silent. We chose vulnerability and shared the raw emotions that exist within the Black community; senior leadership received that and knew, something had to be done."

Strengthening personal bonds and understanding between all employees is an ongoing priority for us. We created a series of Social Video Diaries to showcase frontline employees' experiences in a raw and relatable way. The videos showed employees that their fears and feelings were shared by many and allowed remote workers to engage with their colleagues' experiences and support them from afar.

To bring people together in real-time, virtual events and gatherings were organized, including a Spoken Word event focused on vulnerability and creating a creative space for people to express their emotions together.

Alongside internally created content and programs to foster connection, our Marketing and Internal Communications team shared and amplified inspiring media coverage that recognized employees' courage, dedication, and camaraderie. This included a *60 Minutes* segment on the experiences of our emergency and critical care physicians, the Netflix docuseries *Lenox Hill*, which devoted an episode to how our doctors banded together in the midst of the pandemic to treat critically ill patients, and the FX documentary *They Get Brave* which shared intimate video diaries from healthcare workers at the height of the crisis.

Complementing our formal programs, our people exemplified our “Made for this” promise, finding opportunities to support each other. For instance, Forest Hills Hospital was in a COVID-19 hotspot and saw a significant influx of cases. Northwell nurses at a nearby facility, Cohen Children's Medical Center, went to Forest Hills after their shift and drew a chalk mural outside on the sidewalk to show solidarity. We shared their artwork across our internal channels so everyone — no matter their location — could appreciate and amplify the sense of community. Soon after, every employee entrance into the hospital showcased messages of hope and support.

In another example, Nurse Emily Fawcett saw an opportunity to support the Emergency Department (ED) team at Lenox Hill Hospital. “The team was upset, seeing so many COVID-positive patients coming through the ED, very sick and needing to be intubated and moved to the next level of care,” she said. “They never knew what happened to the patients they’d cared for.” The Hope Huddle, a short meeting where ED teams receive updates on patients they had treated and admitted, helped close the loop and was quickly rolled out across all our hospitals.

In a similar vein, physicians initiated a support system — Physician Reach Out — centered on open conversations between peers on what they were enduring and how they were dealing with losing so many more patients than usual. It was developed alongside a new pilot program, Physician Affinity Groups, to help physicians connect, build relationships, and foster trust through dedicated Yammer channels. The Reach Out and Affinity Groups share the goal of enabling a safe place for physicians to talk with each other and reduce burnout.

4. Spiritual

Our clinically trained chaplains were at the heart of programs designed to provide spiritual comfort for employees and patients. They became essential extended members of our teams and families, providing blessings, counseling, and prayers for hospital units and patients. A system-wide ‘Moment of Prayer’ event brought together onsite and remote employees, connecting our people who were often separated from one another during the crisis.

The most devastating impact for our people is that 20 employees are no longer with us, victims of the disease they worked tirelessly to contain. From doctors and nurses to environmental staff and corporate executives, our employees put their lives on the line to meet this crisis. We’re forever grateful for their willingness to risk their lives to help others and will establish permanent memorials and gardens of remembrance at our hospitals to keep their memories alive.

An essential part of supporting our people was providing a space for communal grieving. We established an online In Memoriam site where employees could add comments or posts about colleagues they had lost, mourn their passing, and celebrate their lives. The site has received over 18,000 visits. We also organized an in-person Day of Remembrance to honor these employees who passed. Families were invited to attend the moving multi-faith ceremony or view it online in real-time. Michael Dowling described the event as "an opportunity to recall, reflect, and remember."

Speaking directly to the loved ones of the deceased employees, Michael Dowling said, "We take this moment to remember the courage and humanity of your loved ones. Today, we honor their memory with the same strength and courage they displayed as they helped care for others. That was their calling – that's what made us all so proud of them." When funerals and large gatherings were prohibited, the Day of Remembrance was particularly meaningful in allowing people a place to grieve and remember.

5. Financial

It was important to us that financial concerns did not add to employee fears, and we're proud to say during the pandemic, we retained all employees, paying full salaries and benefits, including when exposed employees were asked to self-quarantine.

To help build long-term financial well-being skills, we developed educational resources such as webinars on budget management for employees. We also implemented special provisions for paid time off and waived copayments on virtual medical visits for employees enrolled in our plans.

We recognized the impact of physical distancing on caregivers and offered enhanced childcare benefits, including crisis care reimbursement and a subsidized in-person childcare program for the 2020-2021 school year to help offset the financial strain.

Recognizing the need for additional help, we created the Northwell Heroes Caregiver Support Fund. The fund provides resources to employees who have been financially impacted due to the pandemic, through spousal job loss or a family member's death, for example. To date, the fund has disbursed \$490,000.

Employees were encouraged to contribute to the fund by participating in the Northwell Heroes Challenge, where they chose a distance to walk, run, or bike. The Challenge, which raised over \$54,000 in four weeks, focused employees on their physical well-being while working towards a common goal of financially supporting those who needed it most, underscoring our Truly Compassionate value.

To us, fully supporting our employees means supporting their families, too, and it's why we set up the Northwell Heroes Memorial Fund. The fund, which has raised over \$323,000, supports the families of heroes we lost to this devastating virus, including help with funeral expenses, memorials, and other related expenses. We also extended salary and benefits which the families continue to receive.

Lastly, we awarded a \$2,500 bonus and an additional week of PTO to over 54,000 heroes who played an instrumental role in our COVID-19 response, an investment of nearly \$132 million. Recipients received a note and certificate from Michael Dowling expressing his appreciation: "You ran towards the danger so others could stay safe."

Showing Our Gratitude

We are indebted to our people for their courage and commitment, but finding ways to express our

gratitude doesn't always mean a formal event or program. One of the most impactful acts of recognition has been the continued visits by leaders to clinical settings. It's a standard practice at Northwell, but with so little human contact possible because of COVID-19, it was especially meaningful to employees that leaders including Michael Dowling and other executives, spent time walking the units, conversing, and encouraging teams, especially those working in ICU's and Emergency Departments. Visibility and approachability of such leadership provided a great sense of support, pride and camaraderie.

"I was incredibly impressed with the response to the Coronavirus pandemic here at our site. We are a small building, but I could feel the support from leadership every day. I felt like they had our backs." – Employee response to the Trust Index Survey.

We recognized the importance of creating opportunities for our people to celebrate victories large and small, and designed the Northwell Heroes campaign to show support and raise morale. It included social media storytelling, signage and screensavers throughout our hospitals centered on celebrations and acknowledging sacrifices. For World Gratitude Day on September 21, we created a special recognition video shared with employees, together with a toolkit for leaders containing ideas for ways they could express gratitude with their teams.

Our Volunteer Celebration Day, 'The Extra Mile', gave us the opportunity to thank employees who volunteered to support other out-of-state health systems with delivering care and sharing best practices. At the in-person event, led by Michael Dowling, we played video messages of thanks from the hospitals where our teams had deployed, and presented each volunteer with a recognition gift and certificate.

Many sites held 'clap outs' where local and executive leadership, community members like firefighters and police officers, and others applauded our frontline employees as they arrived for or left their shifts, reinforcing our sense of camaraderie and strengthening the bond with our communities.

COVID-19'S IMPACT ON OUR COMMUNITIES

"[The pandemic] bred a tremendous amount of anxiety in New Yorkers. We wanted to get out early and make sure we were communicating to New Yorkers. We're here for you. We're going to go through this with you. And we will get through this together." – Ramon Soto, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer

The pandemic tore through New York, appearing frightening and unstoppable. As the pandemic highlighted long-standing health disparities experienced by many of the communities we serve, we stayed intensely focused on improving healthcare for all of our neighbors.

To support disproportionately affected communities, we sent teams to Black, Latinx, and other neighborhoods to establish much-needed testing centers in more than 40 churches and community buildings.

We set up dozens of testing centers for first responders, including police and firefighters, state police, corrections department employees, and the Metropolitan Transit Authority. We also worked with the New York State Department of Health (DOH) to establish the state's first drive-through satellite testing facility and later helped the DOH open testing sites at other locales with viral clusters.

Early on, it was clear there would be an increased need for beds – we estimated we would need to

increase from 3,100 to nearly 5,000 to accommodate increased patient numbers. To do so, our employees transformed conference rooms, recovery rooms, and even auditoriums into clinical treatment sites. Our leaders helped establish the overflow hospital space at the Javits Conference Center and onboard USNS Comfort, a Navy hospital ship dispatched by the federal government to New York Harbor.

Using Technology to Support Patients

One of the most heartbreaking realities patients and families experienced was that isolation protocols kept them from visiting. In response, our employees used iPads and tablets generously provided by donors to enable comforting virtual visits. We'll continue virtual visits beyond the pandemic to connect patients with loved ones wherever they are. "Patients don't have to feel alone," says Sven Gierlinger, Senior Vice President and Chief Experience Officer. "Families being able to check in on their loved ones can go a long way in someone's wellness and recovery. We're making sure these connections can still happen despite the challenges COVID-19 presents." Numerous stories of patients whose conditions improved after virtually connecting with a family member show us that the technology has measurable impacts on hope, spirits, and recovery.

Virtual visits are also meaningful to employees, who are grateful for the opportunity to comfort families as they would under normal circumstances. "It was my honor to connect families with their loved ones during their brightest moments or their darkest hours," says Marcy Hohorst, Family Liaison at Plainview Hospital. "Someday, when COVID-19 is a distant memory, I will be proud to say, 'I was the nurse with the iPad.'"

We further leveraged technology to expand our Telehealth programs to allow non-hospitalized patients to monitor their health and connect with physicians from the safety of their homes. Since the pandemic struck, 8,000 physicians, nurse practitioners, and nurses have conducted more than 112,000 telehealth visits, up from 200 before the outbreak.

Not all our connectivity solutions were high-tech, however. For instance, two of our nurses launched Project Unseen Heroes, creating photo badges for clinical staff so patients could see a smiling face despite head-to-toe PPE.

Community Education and Resources

"We're the largest healthcare institution in the most significantly impacted area; of course it's on us to take a leadership role." – Tom Sclafani, Vice President, Internal Communications

Especially in the early days of the pandemic, when the community was most frightened, clear and authoritative advice was much needed and hard to come by. "An important way we can all help combat the spread of the coronavirus is to communicate honestly and directly with people, families, and businesses — and provide useful information they can use to protect themselves," said Michael Dowling. We responded by creating over a thousand pieces of high-quality, reliable content through a digital and TV campaign called "Information is Healthy, Fear is Not."

The campaign centered on an ad highlighting the courage and resolve of New Yorkers and their commitment to one another — "in the darkest hour we can find the light" — urging viewers to seek accurate information from our Coronavirus Digital Resource Center and health officials. We continually update the resource center with the latest advice and facts about the disease, such as tips for senior citizens and caregivers, and how to recognize COVID-19 symptoms. The site also features uplifting

stories about patients and healthcare workers who survived the virus.

Joining the Fight for Treatments

Combatting the pandemic in our community means supporting the race for a COVID-19 vaccine. Northwell's Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research initiated seven treatment clinical trials and programs, enrolling more than 1,200 patients within a month to investigate viable treatments. Eliminating red tape and encouraging our scientists to take the lead, we formed the multidisciplinary COVID-19 Clinical Trials Unit to accelerate trial launches. Trial set-up often takes months, but we began enrolling patients for our first trial, with Regeneron Pharmaceuticals and Sanofi, within three days.

"We are exhausted but exhilarated, knowing research is beneficial to patients around the world." – Dr. Joseph Conigliaro, Professor, Institute of Health Innovations & Outcomes Research, Feinstein Institutes

Full Circle with Our Community

While our focus was on serving the community through our hospitals, testing centers, information, and research efforts, it wasn't a one-way street. As a nonprofit organization, we rely on our donors' support, and between March and June, they generously contributed in-kind donations of PPE, medical supplies, and a steady stream of meals and wellness products for frontline workers.

Donations didn't have to be large to make a difference. Nurse Manager Nicole Ciccione reached out to her community to ask for toiletries to help patients feel more like themselves and devices for virtual connection. Emergency Department Nurse Ashley Sells created a fundraiser to purchase soft pillows to keep patients comfortable during their hospital stay. The overwhelming response to both these initiatives was a reminder of our deep community ties.

LEADERSHIP FOR ALL

"We all went into this for a reason. This is one of the most mission-driven times in our lives. This is why we went into medicine. We dive in; we don't step back." – Jill Kalman, Executive Director, Lenox Hill Hospital

Our brand promise is "Transformative leadership driving the future of health, wellness, and quality of life," and our leaders live it every day. The pandemic has shown how much we can accomplish when we unleash that transformative leadership at every level of the organization. By simplifying our processes, we've enabled new and faster solutions for staffing and supply issues. We've also delivered technological solutions that benefit the healthcare community, including a predictive tool developed by our Customer Insights Group which anticipates spikes in cases by mining website data patterns.

Our people felt empowered to take the lead in matters large and small, and there are countless stories of innovations and acts of compassion. For instance, Nurse Executive Kelly Treacy enlisted the help of our Engineering Department to rapidly develop and build a plexiglass box to shield clinicians during intubation, when a patient will often cough, expelling airborne viral load. In less than two weeks, from discussion to production, the designs were shared openly so anybody outside Northwell could replicate. Dr. Hugh Cassiere couldn't rest until he found a solution for an anticipated ventilator shortage. He teamed up with a respiratory therapist and a 3D bioengineer to successfully convert bi-level positive airway pressure (BIPAP) machines, commonly used for patients with sleep apnea, into functioning ventilators. The team 3D printed the adapter, and brought this innovation to life in days. We also utilized 3D printing to provide nasal testing swabs when supplies were running low.

Exemplifying our value of Truly Compassionate, John Baez, who works in the Environmental Services Department stayed overnight at Staten Island University Hospital to hold the hand of a dying patient who would have passed away alone otherwise. Two of our nurses, one who formerly experienced homelessness himself, set up a program to raise money for and donate food and clothing to our community's homeless population. Leadership and compassion go hand in hand at Northwell.

Leadership Across the Healthcare Industry and the World

As New York's largest healthcare provider, our ability to analyze more data points around COVID-19, ask more questions, and see the broadest picture enables us to share the best possible outcomes with the scientific community at large. Our findings have been published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, and we've described the clinical course and outcomes of 5,700 hospitalized patients. And as the virus fluctuates, we continue to share information and operational best practices directly with more than 25 health systems, and our leaders continue to be interviewed by national news outlets to share insights. As mentioned, our teams' experiences have been profiled through television programs like the Netflix *Lenox Hill* docuseries. We have also formed a partnership with JetBlue to design a set of COVID-19 services and programs for the airline, including testing and clinical concierge systems for JetBlue crew that will be provided by Northwell Health Solutions, our care management arm.

In the spirit of sharing what we learned to help others, Michael Dowling's book, "Leading Through A Pandemic: The Inside Story of Humanity, Innovation, and Lessons Learned During the COVID-19 Crisis" was published in August 2020. It discusses our administrative and clinical challenges and successes, and offers guidance on how other hospitals and health systems can prepare more effectively for future threats.

Looking Ahead

"I never thought of myself as a hero. But we are first responders. This is our calling, our job, and what we do every day." – Elyse Isopo, NP, Intensive Care Unit, North Shore University Hospital

For our people, this year has been one of extreme stress, long hours, and sometimes reassignment to a different role or the sudden adjustment to working from home. We aren't yet sure of the long-term effects on mental health, but an increase in severe psychological conditions is likely. We're monitoring it and will continue to offer expanded well-being support, building out resources such as our Center for Traumatic Stress, Resilience and Recovery. We hope the sense of togetherness, compassion, and camaraderie is something our people hold tightly, no matter what lies ahead.

That said, going back to 'normal' will not happen. Our experience with COVID-19 and civil justice changed the world and forced us to find new ways of working. We now have over 10,000 employees working remotely, expanded care offerings to support them to continue to be heroes, and we ensure decency, humanity, to have the best workplace for all enabling ingenuity and resilience to continue to respond to the unexpected. And while we can't predict what's next we have the sheer grit and determination and an incredible team to see us through.

"It is our job now to try and see over the horizon and to adapt to that future in ways that provide greater healthcare equity, quality, and value than ever before. We are forced to do this due to a catastrophic event. At the same time, we welcome the opportunity to find the best pathways forward."
– Michael Dowling